

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 8 December 2006 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to refer to my report of 29 September 2006 (S/2006/783) on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), in which I indicated my intention to propose a revision of the mandate of UNOGBIS and request its extension until 31 December 2007.

During 2006, UNOGBIS continued to contribute to Guinea-Bissau's stabilization and reconciliation efforts. While encouraging progress has been achieved, especially in the establishment of a framework for security sector reform, much more remains to be done to consolidate and sustain the momentum for democratic governance in order to prevent a relapse into conflict. Recent developments have highlighted the continued volatility of the situation, as the major opposition parties have intensified pressure on President Vieira to dismiss the Government appointed just over a year ago, in October 2005.

The convening of the Donor Round Table on Guinea-Bissau, held in Geneva from 7 to 8 November 2006, confirmed the international community's continued readiness to be supportive of the country's reconstruction efforts in a climate of peace and stability. A Secretariat assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau in May 2006 concluded that a United Nations political presence in that country remained vital in order to contribute to stabilization, without which the full resumption of development cooperation and economic investment, essential for sustainable peace and progress, cannot be guaranteed.

On 8 November 2006, Prime Minister Aristides Gomes wrote to inform me that the situation in his country remains extremely fragile, especially given that the Government's enormous resource constraints hampered its ability to meet its statutory responsibilities in a timely fashion. The Prime Minister, therefore, requested emergency financial assistance from the United Nations Peacebuilding and Democracy Funds to fill the budget gaps for 2006 and 2007. His request further demonstrates the continuing necessity for international engagement with Guinea-Bissau as it strives to consolidate peace and enhance prospects for development.

President Vieira and other senior members of his Government have, in recent meetings with my new Representative in Guinea-Bissau, Shola Omoregie, expressed the same concerns conveyed to me by the Prime Minister and reiterated the country's desire for enhanced international cooperation, in particular with UNOGBIS, to promote peace and progress in the country.



In the light of the above, I recommend that the mandate of UNOGBIS be extended for one year, until 31 December 2007, to allow the Office to continue assisting Guinea-Bissau as it pursues its difficult peacebuilding process. The proposed extension would allow UNOGBIS to operate under a streamlined mandate highlighting mediation and good offices functions aimed at promoting dialogue and reconciliation in order to reduce current divisive and polarizing pressures hampering the restoration of normalcy.

Accordingly, the activities of UNOGBIS would focus on: (a) supporting national reconciliation and dialogue; (b) assisting with security sector reforms; (c) promoting respect for the rule of law and human rights; (d) mainstreaming a gender perspective into peacebuilding, in line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); (e) promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes; (f) helping mobilize international assistance reconstruction efforts; (g) facilitating efforts to curb proliferation of small arms and light weapons; and (h) enhancing cooperation with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the European Union and other international partners.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. Annan
